

Monthly news & updates



December, 2020 | Issue #7



Message from Nkia Richardson, Executive Director:

It can be tempting to focus on the losses, challenges, divisiveness and separation so many of us have experienced this year. I get it and I also want to remember all that we have gained...

Continue reading Nkia's message [here](#).

Your Impact at Connect to Protect

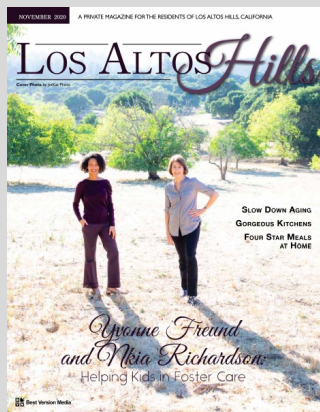
Thank you to our sponsors and supporters for making our inaugural virtual fundraiser such an amazing success. Together we raised \$334,175 for our CASA program to support our youth in the foster care and juvenile justice systems. We are humbled by the generosity of so many people who showed our kids that they have they a community that cares about their safety and well-being.

If you missed the event, or want to see it again:

[2-minute compilation on CASA Tonie and Marlene](#)

[The 17-minute CASA story](#)

[The complete 1-hour benefit](#)



CASA Advocate Spotlight

CASA Yvonne Freund made the cover of local Los Altos Hills Magazine, where she shares her path to service (both in her career and advocacy as a CASA).

[Read Yvonne's story here](#) and get ready to be inspired.

Tis the Season!

Like other in-person events this year, we had to transition our holiday gift giving to a socially distanced hand-off, rather than our traditional holiday party. That did not deter our CASAs from picking up and delivering gift bags for their youth. And they had lots of generous items to give: from the Build-A-Bears made, dressed and gifted by students at Charles Armstrong School to games,

Legos, books and so much more gifted by St. Matthews Episcopal Day School. Thank you to all those who made this a success by bringing some much needed joy to so many youth this season.



Staff safely handing gifts to CASAs to be delivered to their youth



Getting hugs from a new friend this holiday season!

From one of our CASAs:

"I don't get to see Kevin in person very often but I did get to see him on Friday to drop off the gifts. He said something really cute:

"I am so tired of this Coronavirus! I just want to give you a hug!" I was so happy to hear it because it means we are keeping our connection even though it doesn't always feel like it."

Roadmap for Resilience: Report on Adverse Childhood Experiences

DECEMBER 09, 2020

Roadmap for Resilience

The California Surgeon General's Report on Adverse Childhood Experiences, Toxic Stress, and Health



Children and youth who enter foster care, especially those who are very young, are very vulnerable to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), including the traumatic incidents of abuse, neglect or household instability. Enduring ACEs causes children and youth to experience toxic stress – a chronic state of fight-flight-or-freeze, where they learn reactionary coping mechanisms (e.g., lashing out, running away, emotionally shutting down) because they're focused on survival.

Pairing youth with a CASA is one way to help reverse the effects of ACEs in building resilience through caring and stable relationships. In this report, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, California's Surgeon General, provides a "roadmap for resilience" as a blueprint for how communities can recognize and effectively address ACEs and toxic stress as a root cause to some of the most harmful, persistent and expensive societal and health challenges facing our world today. **[Continue reading here](#)** for the report and other key resources.



Credit: Allison Maletz

For Many In Child Welfare, 2020 Is a Lost Year

The pandemic disrupted many of the services necessary for parents involved with the child welfare system to be reunified with their children. As a result, reunifications and adoptions have been lower in 2020 compared to prior years, and many birth parents, foster parents and children have been stuck in limbo.

[Continue reading the story here.](#)

Choose a Gift That Changes Lives

Since 2009, New York Times columnist and two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Nicholas Kristof has written an annual "holiday gift guide" column to bridge a philanthropic gap: readers who wanted to help but didn't know how, and heroic individuals and organizations who desperately needed resources but were off donors' radar. This year, Kristof chose CASA as one of two organizations to consider for volunteer opportunities.

[Continue reading here](#) for Kristof's 2020 Holiday Impact Prize as part of this annual call to action.

Happy holidays from the CASA staff



[Click here to read our previous newsletter, October 2020!](#)

[CASA of San Mateo County](#)

Thank you for making
your year-end gift!



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